

CLAIMS AMENDMENTS

Please amend the claims as follows:

CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A protector device ~~(1, 10)~~ for protecting electrical equipment against transient surges, the device comprising:

a. ~~firstly~~ a spark gap ~~(2, 20)~~ presenting intrinsic capacity to break follow current; and
b. ~~secondly~~ an improvement member ~~(5, 50)~~ for improving the follow current breaking power;

which wherein the member co-operates with the spark gap ~~(2, 20)~~ in ~~such a manner that~~ the protector device ~~(1, 10)~~ presents resultant follow current breaking capacity that is significantly greater than said intrinsic capacity, wherein the device ~~being characterized in that~~ for equipment presenting an assumed short-circuit current that exceeds said intrinsic breaking capacity of the spark gap ~~(2, 20)~~, the improvement member ~~(5, 50)~~ comprises limiter means ~~(6, 60)~~ for limiting the magnitude of the electrical current passing through the spark gap ~~(2, 20)~~, said limiter means ~~(6, 60)~~ being specifically designed and connected relative to the spark gap ~~(2, 20)~~ to limit the magnitude of the follow current in such a manner that said follow current can be interrupted by the intrinsic follow current breaking capacity of the spark gap ~~(2, 20)~~ alone.

2. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~The device ~~(1, 10)~~ ~~according to of~~ claim 1, ~~characterized in that wherein~~ the improvement member ~~(5, 50)~~ comprises a resistive element ~~(9, 90)~~ connected in series with the spark gap ~~(2, 20)~~.

3. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~The device ~~(1, 10)~~ ~~according to of~~ claim 2, ~~characterized in that wherein~~ the resistive element ~~(9, 90)~~ presents substantially no self-induction.

4. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~The device ~~(1, 10)~~ ~~according to of~~ claim 2 ~~or claim 3~~, ~~characterized in that wherein~~ the resistive element ~~(9, 90)~~ is formed by an electrical resistor ~~(9)~~.

5. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~The device ~~(1, 10)~~ ~~according to of~~ claim 2 ~~or claim 3~~, ~~characterized in that wherein it said device~~ includes an electrical connection means for connecting the spark gap ~~(2, 20)~~ to the electrical equipment, said connection means forming the resistive element ~~(90)~~.

6. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~The device (1, 10) according to any one of claims 2 to 5, characterized in that wherein the improvement member ~~(5, 50)~~ is constituted exclusively by the resistive element ~~(9, 90)~~.

7. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~The device (1, 10) according to any one of claims 1 to 6, characterized in that wherein it the device constitutes a lightning arrestor.

8. (Currently Amended) A method of protecting electrical equipment against transient surges in which the electrical equipment is connected to a protector device ~~(1, 10)~~ comprising:

_____ a. ~~firstly~~ a spark gap ~~(2, 20)~~ presenting intrinsic capacity to break follow current; and
_____ b. ~~secondly~~ an improvement member ~~(5, 50)~~ for improving the follow current breaking power, which member co-operates with the spark gap ~~(2, 20)~~ in such a manner that the device ~~(1, 10)~~ presents resultant follow current breaking capacity that is significantly greater than said intrinsic capacity,

_____ the method being characterized in that for equipment presenting an assumed short-circuit current that exceeds said intrinsic breaking capacity of the spark gap ~~(2, 20)~~, the improvement member ~~(5, 50)~~ comprises limiter means ~~(6, 60)~~ for limiting the magnitude of the electrical current passing through the spark gap ~~(2, 20)~~, said limiter means ~~(6, 60)~~ being specifically designed and connected relative to the spark gap ~~(2, 20)~~ to limit the magnitude of the follow current in such a manner that said follow current can be interrupted by the intrinsic follow current breaking capacity of the spark gap ~~(2, 20)~~ alone.

9. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~The method according to of claim 8, characterized in that wherein the improvement member ~~(5, 50)~~ comprises a resistive element ~~(9, 90)~~ connected in series with the spark gap ~~(2, 20)~~.

10. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~The method according to of claim 9, characterized in that wherein the resistive element ~~(9, 90)~~ is formed by an electrical resistor ~~(9)~~.

11. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~The method according to of claim 9, characterized in that wherein the spark gap ~~(2, 20)~~ is connected to the equipment by electrical connection means, said connection means forming the resistive element ~~(90)~~.

12. (Currently Amended) The use of limiter means ~~(6, 60)~~ for limiting the magnitude of electric current as an improvement member ~~(5, 50)~~ for improving the follow current breaking power of a protector device ~~(1, 10)~~ for protecting electrical equipment against transient surges, said device

(1, 10) comprising a spark gap (2, 20) presenting an intrinsic capacity to break follow current, the improvement member (5, 50) for improving follow current breaking power co-operating with the spark gap (2, 20) so that the protector device (1, 10) presents a resultant follow current breaking capacity that is significantly greater than said intrinsic capacity, the use being characterized in that for equipment presenting an assumed short-circuit current that exceeds said intrinsic breaking capacity of the spark gap (2, 20), the limiter means (6, 60) is specifically designed and connected relative to the spark gap (2, 20) to limit the magnitude of the follow current passing through the spark gap (2, 20) in such a manner that said follow current can be interrupted by the intrinsic follow current breaking capacity of the spark gap (2, 20) alone.

13. (New) The device of claim 2, wherein the resistive element is formed by an electrical resistor.

14. (New) The device of claim 2, wherein said device includes an electrical connection means for connecting the spark gap to the electrical equipment, said connection means forming the resistive element.